FOOLISH TALKING AND JESTING

Deſcribed and Condemned.

In A

DISCOURSE

ON

Epheſ. 5. 4. *Neither Fooliſh Talking, nor Jeſting, which are not convenient.*

By *DANIEL BURGESS.*

LONDON,
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TO

ROBERT GROVE Eſq;

Of *Fernes* in *Wiltſhire*;

AND TO

Madam TRYPHENA

His Conſort.

My Honoured Friends,

I *Do not ſet here your* Names, *deſigning to Celebrate your rare Chriſtian* Vertues. *Theſe have long ſhone brightly in your* Country; *and their Fame hath rung very loudly in this* City. *You* have good report of all Men, and of the Truth it ſelf. *So that it would be no* News

if it ſhould be here told what your Praiſe *is in the Churches.*

Wherefore, I Meditate what is more Expedient; *what doth better* Become *me, and will leſs* Diſpleaſe *you. Intending no more, than to make you a ſmall Preſent of theſe Pages, as an Acknowledgment of your Favours.*

Their Subject is, unto Moſt, a Hard-Saying; *with too Many, an* Obſolete *one; and whereof, not a few will ſay,* Who can bear it? *Nor ſhould I have thought it an Argument grateful to your own Palats, but that I do very well know* under what Shadow you Sit, and whoſe Fruit it is that is ſweet to your Taſte. *Whereby I am certified, that you will as much* more Value *this Diſcourſe, as you* leſs Need *it,*

than

than others do for the Regulation of your own Speech.

I ſhall Congratulate my Self the good Nature *of my Readers, if it be* he who really Needs it not, *that* Caſts the firſt Stone at it. *But, I will reverence the Doctrine that I Preach; and Talk no more to you in this Porch.*

With a ſpecial Flame my Prayer aſcends, for your Selves, *and your bleſſed* Branches. *The good Lord continue ſtill, to* teach you the Way that you are to Chuſe; *and to* make your Souls dwell at Eaſe *in Grace, till they ſhall triumph in Glory!* May your Seed *after you* inherit the Earth; *and be ſuch Bleſſings unto their Country as your* Holy Anceſtors *have been, and as you your ſelves are this*

this Day! Thus, pray, very many; but none more ſincerely, than

Your true Honourer,

Daniel Burgeſs.

Bridges-Street, near
Covent-Garden,
Jan. 22. 169$\frac{3}{4}$.

FOOLISH

FOOLISH Talking and Jeſting Deſcribed and Condemned.

Epheſ. 5. 4. *Neither Fooliſh Talking, nor Jeſting, which are not convenient.*

Καὶ Μωρολογία ἢ Εὐτραπελια, τὰ οὐκ Ἀνήκοντα. Nec Sermones Stultitiæ, *Syriac.* Stultiloquia, *Æthiopic.* & *Arabic.*

THE Foot of the foregoing Chapter, is the Head of this. The ſame Precepts which there conclude, do here begin. Being of extraordinary moment, they are reſumed and farther preſſed. Few Words may ſuffice for Mint and Aniſe; but the weightier Things of

Religion, as they are more opposed, must be more urged.

Weighty indeed are these Precepts; great be the *Duties* required, and great the *Sins* forbidden.

The Duties, are Imitation of God in our Love unto Offending Men. And, Conformity to our Redeemer in the Kindness of our Behaviour towards them. The Heavenly Father multiplies to pardon; and so must we, if we will be his Children. It is said of him, *Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth Iniquity?* And it should be said of us, *What People are like unto you that forgive one another, as God forgiveth you?* Our blessed Redeemer laid down his Life for us; and looks that, at his Call, we give our Lives for each other, 1 *John* 3. 16. *His Love passeth all Understanding*; and ours is not right, till *it* set the World marvelling at it. *This is the Gospel, where-ever be the Christians.*

The

The Sins forbidden, are the mighty ones following; *Fornication and all Uncleanneſs*; the Hecticks that conſume, and carry apace from the deep Ditch into the bottomleſs Pit. *Covetouſneſs*, the Wen and Wolf in the Heart, more painful and mortal than any in the Fleſh. *Filthineſs*, or *filthy Speaking*; the *Ileos*, the *Miſerere mei*, the Diſeaſe which brings up the worſt of Excrements through the Mouth; which vomits the Ordure of Ribaldry. *Fooliſh Talking*; the Rupture of Speech from Reaſon: Language, like to that of *Balaam*'s Aſs, without Reaſon; and much worſe, becauſe againſt it alſo. Laſtly, *Fooliſh Jeſting*; the falling Sickneſs of Wit; it's Phrenzy, and Sportiveneſs in Games of pernicious Folly. Theſe, all, are of the ſame baſe Blood; all, with the ſame rare Emphaſis, and ſelf-ſame Arguments prohibited.

Theſe we are commanded, *Not once to name*; that is, to abhor unto extremity; utterly to deteſt. So the

Royal Pſalmiſt, and ſo our Apoſtle elſewhere, is known to have uſed this pungent Phraſe of *Not naming*, Pſal. 16. 4. 1 Cor. 5. 1. Of theſe we are told, *They become not Saints*; that is, they are not only in themſelves, unrighteous Things; but are, in all Eyes, as unſeemly ones for Saints, as Feeding on Carrion and Lodging in Kennels would be for Kings Children. It is added, They are *Inconvenient*; that is, Intolerable; though the Men of *Athens* ſaw nothing very culpable in ſome of them, and fancied there was a Spirit very commendable in others. In ſhort, They are peſtilent Vices, and inconſiſtent with Chriſtian Graces. Indeed Pagan Moraliſts made ſome of them to be egregious Vertues, and the reſt to be but very ſmall Faults. But the Goſpel of Chriſt makes them ſuch Vices, as not only ſtrip us of every Ornament, but of our very Raiment. And leave us nothing but Shame and Nakedneſs of our unſanctified Natures.

Hugely

Hugely do Men differ from Swine in their Natures and Dignities; but no leſs do Saints differ from unſanctified Men in their Qualities and Relations. A Saint hath paſſed a ſecond Birth. After Redemption by infinite Price, he is regenerated by infinite Power: Made Partaker of the Divine Nature, and adopted into the Favour and Family of Heaven. In a word; He is one dearly cleanſed, and richly adorned. More than Heaven and Earth is worth, hath been laid out to Juſtify and Sanctify him. Wherefore, if he be ſick to ſee, what ſenſual Creatures are ſick of Luſt to enjoy; if he be aſhamed of their Glory; if their Meat be his Poiſon; it is no more matter of wonder, than that Doves will die rather than fetch Meat from the Dung and Filth, in which unclean Birds delight.

It is the Filth of the two laſt named Vices, *Fooliſh Talking and Jeſting*, that I eſſay to diſcover. The Snakes which lay in the Dunghils

of the other, are more in ſight; and are of leſs ſpecious Colours. Inſomuch, that until they do get them Cloven-feet, Men attain not unto obſcene Tongues. Much leſs do they further violate the Seventh Commandment. But, ſadly it muſt be ſaid; the Sins which I ſet me to detect and ſhame, are gotten into univerſal Uſe, and almoſt Catholick Credit alſo. Their Dunghil is covered with the Snow, which I ſhall labour to remove. Their Serpents paſs for Fiſh, even in Religious Mens Markets.

To give the worſt its due; Our Age it ſelf doth not, by a general Vote, abrogate all the Ten Commandments. It runs not down every Divine Teſtimony, with a *Nemine Contradicente*. There are Laws made void by many looſe Profeſſors, which are valiantly (that is, practically) propugnated by their Betters. But the Law againſt Fooliſh Talking and Jeſting, ſeems utterly repealed among us,

us. *No Man ſtands by it; All Men forſake it.* It is one, *Every where ſpoken againſt.* One that ſuffers in the Houſe of its Friends; yea, by the Tongue of Men and Angels. I mean, by many conſecrated Tongues of the Angels of the Churches. Tongues, commiſſioned and commanded to preach this Doctrine, which well deſerves to be every Chriſtian's Obſervation:

Fooliſh Talking and Jeſting muſt be deteſted as things ungodly, unſeemly, and intolerable in Saints. As truly ſo, as Fornication and Uncleanneſs, as Covetouſneſs and Filthineſs; of whoſe Company and Kindred they are proclaimed to be.

It ſhall be ſhown,

1. What *Fooliſh Talking* is?
2. What *Fooliſh Jeſting* is?
3. What *their deteſtable Turpitude* and *Filth* is? and ſpecially in Saints.
4. What the *Uſe of this Doctrine* is?

O Lord God and Father of Jeſus Chriſt, I pray thee ſend me good ſpeed this Day! Giving me a Mouth and Wiſdom which all my Adverſaries ſhall not be able to gainſay, or reſiſt! In Faith and Hope, I proceed.

§. 1. What is *Fooliſh Talk?*

The *Nature* of it, is not far to ſeek. All the World will grant, Folly is Sin; and Sin is Inconformity to the Precept and Example of our Soveraign Prince and Pattern. Unto us, Chriſt Jeſus is both; and the Speech which he hath required and exemplified, is ſuch as honoureth God and profiteth Men. Thereby anſwering the unqueſtionable Ends of ſo rare a Gift unto our Nature. Thereby ſerving the Uſes for which Speech was framed, and to which it is fitted. So that Fooliſh Talk is all, and only that, which is not deſigned and adapted unto the foreſaid Ends and Uſes. But thwarts the ſame; contra-

contradicts our Saviour's Example, and tranſgreſſeth his Law. Of ſuch Talk, *Nabal is the Name*, in Chriſt's School: That *Folly is with it*, his Diſciples will atteſt. Unthinking Creatures do fancy it to be harmleſs; but none of theſe can hold it guiltleſs. *This Tranſgreſſion of Talkative Men ſaith within their Hearts, that there is not a juſt Fear of God before their Eyes.*

The *Kinds* of this Fooliſh Talk, are numerous and various: Even as the Follies of Thought and Action, whereto they run parallel. A Sermon is too ſmall a Map to hold their wide World. But theſe Particulars will ſet in view the moſt principal.

1. *Profane Talk is fooliſh.* It is Profane, whatever mentioneth Things ſacred, *without Veneration expreſſed.* Whatever makes not its Honours, and its higheſt ones, unto their Majeſty. Who, but a Fool, will either not bow to the King; or, no lower than unto one of his Pages? It is a ſenſeleſs Babler, that talks of holy Perſons, Things

Things or Actions, without hallowing their Names: Without paying them their due Obſervance, by ſome or other Emphaſis. If I ſpeak of them as a *Gallio*, I do make my ſelf an *Eſau!*

It is a Profaneneſs more groſs, when *Scurrility is added to Sacrilege.* When Veneration is ſacrilegiouſly withheld, and Injury and Indignity is offered. Indignity, of wretched Tendence to ſubvert the Faith of Hearers; and to impair their Reverence. When uncircumciſed Lips drop no Praiſes, but pour out Slights, upon Religion or its Votaries. He is a more grown *Eſau*, that dares thus to do. A *Gallio* is a younger Brother to ſuch a Scorner. And if ſuch Talkers muſt paſs for wiſe Men, *Senacherib* muſt be canonized for a *Saint*; and *Antiochus* be no more called *Mad*. *Plato*, like as *Moſes*, adjudged to Death ſuch Fools. And the *Turks* ſtick not to kill the Man, that preſumes to ſpeak contumeliouſly of *Mahomet* or the *Alcoran*.

The

The words of Biſhop *Wilkins* are very Sun-beams; *A Devout Heathen is better than a Profane Chriſtian.*

Indeed there is a Pitch of Profaneneſs to which not one *Eſau* of many, hath uſed to grow, One which I was minded therefore in ſilence to paſs over. But ſecond thoughts allow it not; the numbers of thoſe profane *Anakims* and *Giants*, being as we ſee in this day of ours.

Profane to the uttermoſt is that *Talk, which throws Stones as well as Dirt.* Venteth Wrath as well as Contempt, upon that which is Holy. Breathes forth Threatnings againſt Divine Service, with Scoffs at Divine Attributes, and Statutes. Words turned indeed into Swords; and ſent out for the Deſtruction, not for the ſingle Diſgrace, of God's Servants and Service. He who thus Talks, is the *Goliah* of the Profane Hoſt; the Prince of their Nation; of Devils in Fleſh, the *Beelzebub.* A more Profane Riot, no Tongue can run. Here it muſt ſtand, having

no

no further to go. Unleſs it be in Glorying in this Shame; in Boaſting, that the Conſpiracy of Stupidity and Malice have carried it ſo far. And, left nothing ſave Hell more profoundly Deviliſh, or bloodily fighting againſt Heaven! *Thou loveſt all devouring words, O thou Profane Tongue! God ſhall likewiſe deſtroy thee for ever; he ſhall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy Dwelling place, and root thee out of the Land of the Living.*

2. *Hypocritical Talk is Fooliſh.* A Hypocrite, is a Liar, in a Cloud, by his Ambition raiſed. It is Hypocritical Talk, that deſignedly miſreports the Speaker's Heart. That ſpeaks better than he thinks, of his State, his Diſpoſitions, his Aims, his Actions, or any thing that is his. If this be not Folly, then Darkneſs excelleth Light; the Sun is an annoyance to the World; and Owls and Thieves are Wiſe, for hating the Light of it. For,

Truth

Truth is Light, Falſehood is Darkneſs. The Fountain of Truth hath taken the Name of Light; and the Father of Lies is called the Prince of Darkneſs. And is he a wiſe Speaker, who is likeſt to the Devil, and moſt unlike to God, in his Words? Likeſt to the Devil, that hath no Truth in him; and Unlikeſt to God that cannot lie, and whoſe Word is the Word of Truth. Were it a matter of choice; who would not rather be transformed into the ugliеſt Serpent in *Africa* than into ſuch a Monſter?

Drunkenneſs corrupts not Reaſon, more than Falſeneſs corrupteth Speech; both deſtroy God's Work, as to its proper Uſe. And where is the Wiſdom of the one or other Confuſion? Tiplers, make Beaſts of Men; Diſſemblers, do of Men make Devils.

In ſpeaking unto our Maker, *Feigned Words are the worſt Indignities and Affronts* we can offer. To bely our ſelves in Prayer, is to blaſpheme him to his Face. With open Mouth to

tell

tell him, our Hearts be not naked and open to him. Now Men that are themſelves, uſe to beware of their Words unto earthly Kings.

As for Humane Converſe, hypocritical Talk is its Bane and Death. Much it deſtroyeth, all it corrupteth. Who will converſe with one whom he cannot credit? or who will believe a Liar, even when he ſpeaks Truth? The Mute and Dumb are more deſireable Company, than Men falſe and deceitful. Which, as other Snakes, under their faireſt Skins, all People do hate; even thoſe whom they reach not to hurt. And juſtly; for it is the *Nature* of both to miſchieve us, if it be not in their *Power*. What is Life, without Converſe? and what is Converſe without Sincerity? He that conſiders both, ſhall think it to be wiſely and kindly that God baniſheth diſſembling Lips. And as cruelly and fooliſhly, that any Man recals and uſes them.

Where

Where dwells the Man that deſires not in his heart, to have all the Town take his Word? Hypocrites, are undone, when they are Unbelieved; and yet no Man that knows them can Believe them. Wiſe Men, are they not? to Deſire perfect Impoſſibilities; *i. e.* the Eternal concealment of Lies, or inward belief of revealed ones. It is not the way of the Wiſe to ſail Eaſt, when they would land in the Weſt. To directly-oppoſe their own Deſires; as they notoriouſly do, whoſe Tongues run in Diſſimulation, while their Hearts luſt after the repute of Veracity.

In ſhort; *Men of the falſeſt Tongues would have nothing but very Truth put into their own ears.* But, doth Wiſdom either reject ought but Evil, or embrace the practice of ought but Good? Hypocritical Talk is Innocent, or Harmful; if Innocent, why Angry with other Men for it? if Injurious, what makes the uſe of it Yours? Every Man that uſes it, is Self-condemned!

No

No doubt but *Saul* was ſo, when he preſſed *David* to fight the Lord's Battels; to the end that he might be ſlain by one or other of his Enemies. *Jacob*'s *Sons* were ſo, when they expreſſed Zeal for Religion; vaunted, that none but Men of their Faith, ſhould be taken into their Family; but deſigned only to make way for the Swords, wherewith they cut the knot of the Controverſie about their Siſter's Marriage. *Jezabel* was ſo, when ſhe called for a Faſt, for an After-meal of *Naboth*'s Eſtate and Life. *Judas* was ſo; and ſo was his Succeſſor, *Julian*, when he Preached (what the Hiſtorian calls) his *Play of Chriſtianity*. Plainly; ſo are we all, as oft as our Speech is with Diſſimulation. As oft as our Tongues deliver falſe Copies of our Minds. Yea, though they truly enough do repreſent the Things we ſpeak of. As oft as we ſpeak for God deceitfully; and contend for our

Τὴν ὑποκρισιν τῶ χειστιάνιζειν. Socrat. l. 3.

our holy Faith, unfaithfully. Deſigning to win but the Praiſe of Men, or the Peace of our own Minds; which are madly got, when ſtollen by Lies. Briefly,

A Lie is the utmoſt Corruption of Speech; Deviation from its principal Service; Violation of the Original and principal Law laid upon it. The Tongue's part being not ſo much to deliver what things really are, whereof it is no Judg; as to declare what the Speaker verily thinks of them in his Mind, whereof it is a Witneſs. And the moſt perfect Truth is a Lie in a Hypocrite's Mouth; when, neither Believing it himſelf, nor concerned to have others Believe it, he ſets it forth with a falſe Profeſſion of both. Which Falſity, his own Heart tells him, is of ſo great a Malignity: So great, that it turneth Words of Hony into Gall, of Wine into Poiſon, of Holineſs into Profaneneſs. An aweful Thought, and wor-

thy to be conſidered! Naturaliſts reckon Elephants and Camels among Wild Beaſts, though they do the Service of Tame ones; becauſe their Nature is Wild. Caſuiſts determine Hypocrites to be Liars, though they fill their Mouths with choiceſt Truths; becauſe there is no Truth in their Inward-Parts. *Remove from me the way of Lying, and grant me thy Law graciouſly*, is Wiſe Mens Common Prayer.

3. *Raſh Talk is Fooliſh.* That is Raſh, wherein the Tongue out-runs the Wit. Or, if Wit doth indeed Sail, yet Judgment doth not Steer. Though, of our whole Man, except but only the Heart, it is the Tongue that moſt of all wants Government. So vaſt are the Benefits or Miſchiefs that it is apt to Produce. With ſo much greater Eaſe and Speed, than our Hands and Feet, it doth haſten to produce them; and ſo much more Indefatigably. So very difficultly is

it

it brought to Good-Behaviour; and ſo palpable a miſtake is our Proverb, that *Good words coſt nothing.* Lions being as ſoon made to draw Chariots quietly, as our Tongues to ſpeak inoffenſively. So very difficultly alſo are they reſtrained from Evil; no Bears or Tygers more needing to be kept within Rails, and in Chains. Perpetually is the Tongue preſented with Temptations, which ſute its inward Propenſions; All *Perſons* are Tempters. If High, to Flatter them; if Low, to Inſult over them; if Kind, to Idolize them; if Croſs, to Rage againſt them. And all *Things* are Temptations; Proſperity, to Boaſt; Adverſity, to Murmur; Grateful things, to be Laviſh in their Praiſes; Grievous ones, to be as Prodigal of harſh Cenſures. And, what! are they the Wiſe in Heart, that let ſuch a Creature go without a Guard? The Creature, which, if any of the Subjects of God's Kingdom, needeth his Supream, and our Subordinate Government.

Unnatural it is; the Natural Uſe is changed, when the Tongue leaps before the Mind looks. Brute Creatures will not ſo rebel againſt their Natures; they open their Eyes e're they ſtir their Feet or Wings. Wiſer than we are, whoſe Tongues gallop with the Eye-lids of our Minds ſhut. Unleſs Wiſdom it be, and Reaſon, to put off Nature.

If it be any, it's one full of Impiety; and contrary to the Author and Lord of Nature. He that Speaks as he Spits, what comes next, and Talks without the uſe of his Underſtanding, he Talks without the Fear of his God: And as truly againſt Law, as Nature. Nor is any Thank owing unto his Care, if all the Commands of the firſt Table be not broken by his haſte. The Raſh Talker puts it to the adventure; and interpretatively ſays, He will loſe his God rather than his Word. How mad a Choice? But,

Neither

Neither is Unadviſed Talk more againſt Piety, than againſt Juſtice and Charity. An ever-flowing Fountain of Iniquity it is. For ſeldom is it other than Injurious; as either *Falſe*, robbing Auditors of Truth; or *Contumelious*, robbing them of the Honour due to them; or downright *Felonious*, robbing them of Money; or *Slanderous*, robbing them of their good Name; or ſomeway *Tedious*, robbing them of their Patience; at the leaſt, *Vain*, and robbing them of invaluable Time. A wretched Folly, thus to Plunder and Devour Men raſhly, without any End; or, if any, the worſt that can be propoſed! It would be farther conſidered alſo, That,

The Raſh Talker is not any manner of Felon more than *de ſe*. His Sin doth, moſt mercileſly of all, rob himſelf. While it Scratches other Men, it Stabs him. Much from them it Steals, but himſelf out-right it

Kills. His Raſh Licentious Talk, murders all Wiſe Mens reſpect unto his Name. Deſtroys their Credit to his very Deliberate Words. Mortally wounds the Peace of his Conſcience. Cuts the very Throat of all his juſt Comfort. Perfectly ſlays his Friendſhip with Men of Worth and Repute. Makes his Tongue worſe than none; in the Apoſtle's Phraſe, *Dead while it Lives.* Gives Death to his Underſtanding, the Guide of Life; which no longer lives in us than it leads us. Finally, It is a Mortal Self-Pollution of his blind Will and Affections; which take an infamous Rot, when Judgment ceaſeth to reſtrain and regulate them: as, in Talk that is Raſh, it perpetually doth. Surely, this is *no Wiſdom that can be Juſtified of her Children.* If it be any, it is moſt *Earthly*; yea, *Senſual* and *Deviliſh.* They that do make it their Cuſtom, do firſt make their Conſciences take abundance of Opium. *I have Purpoſed that my Mouth*

Mouth ſhall not Offend, Pſal. 17. 3. *Set a Watch, O Lord, before my Mouth; Keep thou the door of my Lips*, Pſal. 141. 3.

4. *Unſutable Talk is Fooliſh.* What is not aptly tempered for them to whom it is miniſtred. Talk, wherein proper Argument, Language, and Method, are not ſelected. Wherein the Talker becometh not all things unto all Men. Wherein he treats New-born Babes with Strong Meat; and Strong Men with A B C, and Milk. Paints the Glaſs of his Language, to the loſs of Light, among the Unlearned that do need brighteſt Sunſhine: and neglects Decency it ſelf, in his Speech unto the Judicious. Talk, wherein Superiors are not entertained with condecent Reverence; Equals, with Affability; Inferiors, with Courteſy; all Men, with Diſcretion, and Kindneſs, and Modeſty. Proſperous Men, with Congratulation; Afflicted ones with Compaſſion; and every Man,

with the beſt in our Store for his true Benefit, and innocent Delight.

This, I name Unſutable. This, that is not *ſeaſoned with the Salt*, required by the Holy Ghoſt. With Prudence ſeaſoning it as may be beſt for our Deſigns that are good. He that is neither Profane, Hypocritical, or Raſh, muſt neceſſarily be Wiſe. And he that is Wiſe, muſt neceſſarily ſee that all ſuch Talk is Fooliſh. That the Beginning of it is Fooliſh, and the End as Miſchievous.

That, from hence it is; very much from hence, that our Tongues are Servants ſo Unprofitable; and our Diſcourſes do ſo little mend each others Minds, Hearts, and Lives. That Speech, though made for an Engine to turn about all the Human World, maketh no more Converſion unto Good in the very Chriſtian Church. Though ſet by God as the Rudder, to Steer all our Affairs; and the

the Spring, to ſet going all Wheels of Action; to ſtir up Thoughts, to kindle Affections, put to work our Hands, and to walk our Feet; yet, doeth none of theſe mighty Works in the way of Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs; or extremely few.

Unto the Unſutableneſs of it we muſt aſcribe, the loſt Labor of very much Preaching the Sacred Word. And the general Fruitleſneſs of all Conference. By the means thereof it is, that Exhortations, which otherwiſe might be taken in and welcomed, are with Contempt and Choler diſmiſſed. Reproofs, which otherwiſe might Heal, (being received as Salt, though not as Sugar) do Exaſperate, and turn Men from Bad to Worſe, and from Worſe to worſt of all! And, in ſhort, all Converſes, wherewith the Lips of the Wiſe might otherwiſe Feed their Companions, do but, at beſt, Divert them. The Fruit of the Lips, becoming as the Artificial Fruits

Fruits made of Wax; on which moſt People will Gaze, but none do ever Feed.

Yet the Folly of this condemned Talk would be ſomewhat more Venial, were it capable of being hatched of any but a Cockatrice's Egg. Of proceeding from any Cauſes, but the very Worſt. And ſuch as the Unſutable Talker will not dare own. He is not eaſily brought to confeſs *Ignorance*; and plead that he knows not how to Speak properly, or Keep ſilence and hear thoſe that can. *Incogitance* and Forgetfulneſs, are thin Excuſes; and if often put on, will ſoon be worn out. *Sloth*, and unwillingneſs to go to the pains of proper and pertinent Speech, is an Apology of Ink; and will make a Negro more Black. The Plea of *Pride*, and a Luſt to ſhow his own Knowledge without encreaſing other Mens, is a Man's pleading that it pleaſes him to be a Devil. *Cowardice* and fear of being

being barked at by Dogs, if he ſhould frame his Diſcourſe for the Edification of Men, is a flat renunciation of Holy Baptiſm; nor will it be pleaded, till a Creature is deſtitute and at his laſt ſhift. To ſay, it is my *Cuſtom* thus to tranſgreſs with my Mouth; and I cannot break an ill Way, being become my own; is to plead a Neceſſity of Perſeverance to Damnation. *Covetouſneſs and Ambition* are equally groſs Pleas; and till they have the Grace to Repent, few have the Impudence to Boaſt; and none have the Modeſty to Confeſs, that their Talk is to Honor themſelves Sacrilegiouſly, and Enrich themſelves Feloniouſly. That is, by robbing their Maker to exalt their Names, and by robbing their Neighbour to advance their Eſtates. Will any urge the *Example* of ſome admired *Sophi*? and argue, that, let it do ever ſo little good, or none at all, yet it is this *Apollo*'s Argument, Way, and Style. He is ſtrait-way con-

confounded, with as few words as thoſe wherein he can be told, That *unto us Chriſtians there is but one God, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt!* We can call no Man Maſter; nor be followers of a St. *Paul*, further than he follows his Maſter and ours! To conclude, who is he that will plead, *He hath not the Spirit of Chriſt?* Is not acted by that Wiſe and Holy one, who only Knows, and effectually Teaches, to ſute and *pleaſe every Man unto his Edification.* That is; who will plead, that, He is not a Chriſtian? Not any that is more a Chriſtian, than a Statue of Stone is a Man; or the Paint on a Sign-Poſt, that is called ſo, is an Angel! *Lord forgive the Iniquity, and heal the Diſeaſe of this Unexcuſable Talk. Let the words of my Mouth be Milk to Babes, and Meat to ſtronger Chriſtians, and juſtly Tempered for both!*

5. *Unſeaſonable Talk is Fooliſh.* That which is ever ſo well ſuted to Mens Capacity,

Capacity, Taſte and Need, ought as well to be ſuted to their Opportunity, Vacancy, and Seaſons of advantagious receiving it. Are there ſome things, which are never out of Seaſon? Surely, Talking is none of them? But is of thoſe, which Divine Wiſdom pronounceth to be beautiful only in their Seaſon. Times there are, wherein we muſt be, every one, apart; and our Cloſet-door ſhut. Every Man being, there, both the Speaker and Hearer; and the whole Congregation there preſented before God. Times there are, wherein dutiful Contemplation and Action brook not Talking and Hearing. And wherein the Beſt of them are by no means Good, but the Wiſeſt monſtrouſly Fooliſh. In Nature ſo it is, that things moſt Beautiful and Beneficent, out of their Seaſon are Ghaſtly and Malignant. Roſes and Lillies, in the depth of Winter, would be Prodigies; and Sun-ſhine, at Midnight, would make fearful Outcries among us. It

is

is no otherwiſe in Morality; what is Pious and Vertuous at one time, is Profaneneſs and Vice at another. Prayer, in the Seaſon of other Duty, is not God's Delight; and Giving of Alms, when in want wherewith to pay our Debts, is not Bounty but Felony.

Thus muſt it be ſaid, the unſeaſonable Calves of our Lips are the Sacrifice of Fools. And all their Fruits, not brought forth in due ſeaſon, are the Cluſters of *Sodom*. *Words* have been elegantly named the *Children of our Minds*; but, when they come before their time, they are as properly called their *foul Miſcarriages*. And the greateſt Charity that holds Wiſdom company, muſt think Evil of them; and ever doth ſo. For, whatever their Figure is, or their Stature, it's certain they are Lepers. Becauſe, ſo it is; and the Guilty know it is ſo, that

God

God hath no pleaſure in Fools; Fools that will go unto *Tarſus*, when ſent unto *Nineve*. Will be about one thing, when ſet about another. And neglect the Time, if not the Manner and very Matter of his Commands. Who doubts but unſeaſonable Talk is the *Apolluon*, and Deſtroyer of Family and Cloſet-duty? A more bloody Perſecutor than any *Nero*; making worſe Havock of Chriſtian Churches. A wretched *Herod*, that eſpecially falls foul upon Children; who are left uncatechiz'd, and have their Souls ſtarved, by means of this Sin of their Parents. Who as they incenſe God, do not always pleaſe Men. Men, that are wiſe and good, draw the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, upon them. Eſteeming them, as Enemies of Righteouſneſs; and as worthy to be ſo ſlain as the Hypocrites and Profane. Unto Men of but unregenerate Morality, they are an Offence very frequently; and acceptable to none but the Froth and Skum

of

of a Neighbourhood. To the moſt vile, or, at beſt, the moſt ſilly and vain Creatures. Who are ſeldom ever pleaſed, but they are poiſoned alſo; and corrupted, in ſome kind or other, by the unſeaſonable Talker. Whoſe very *Hellebore maketh mad* thoſe whom it finds not ſo. Whoſe beſt Diſcourſes raiſe good Mens Paſſions; and are unlikely Means to lay ill Mens. In ſhort,

There is no Man, be he Carnal, Moral, or Spiritual; that can or ought to like the *Gnats*, that ſing about him when he needs Sleep. Or the *Pillories*, that hold his Ears when he ſhould be at work. The *Turks* that take away his Clothes in cold Weather, wherein he moſt needs them. Or the *Vinegar* that falls on his Nitre, and makes it uſeleſs, as the Royal Preacher expreſſes himſelf. The Talkers we are mentioning are perfectly theſe things; and as unworthy of our good Eſteem and Affections.

Conſe-

Conſequently, none of Wiſdom's Children; being not accepted of God, or approved of Men. Being alſo, as many of them are, ſo very near to the Good which they riſe not up unto. Having it ſo eaſy to them to pleaſe God and profit Men, and doing neither of them. For,

Valuable Gifts and Graces many of them do poſſeſs; and the Church and World might be greatly ſerv'd with their diſcreet Uſe, and ſeaſonable. The Diſeaſes of neither are ſo incurable, but that if Time and Judgment were diſcerned, both might be reformed. Yea, and the *Reformation* (whoſe Name is of ſo frightful Sound among us) might be wrought with Eaſe and Pleaſure. Very Idiots are not ignorant, how the Seaſon of Things doth facilitate and ſweeten them. All know, the Labour is not great to ſail with the Tide; though out of that time, a Boat is a Gally, and a Rower is a Slave. None

queſtion, but that in Hungry-hours, every Meal is a Feaſt; and, without any Miracle, Water is turned to Wine, and every bitter Thing is ſweet. Although otherwhiles, Wine is Wormwood, Bread is Stone, Fiſh Serpent, and it is an unmerciful thing to make a Man eat and drink.

With ſweet Eaſe, and with exquiſite Pleaſure, do their Lips feed and feaſt many, whoſe Care and Conſcience takes the fit Opportunity: Whoſe Lips bring forth their Fruit in due Seaſon. And of them it may be ſaid, *Their Leaf doth not wither, and what they ſay doth proſper. Bleſſed Jeſus, give thy Servants the Learned Tongue to ſpeak our Words in ſeaſon. So ſhall they be like the beſt Wine for thee, our Beloved; going down ſweetly, and cauſing the Lips of them that are aſleep to ſpeak,* Cant. 7. 9.

6. *Exceſſive Talk is Fooliſh.* That is viciouſly Exceſſive, which exceeds the

the Limit ſet by Law. It is the End that gives Law unto Means. The End of Speech is God's Glory, and Man's Good; and the due Meaſure of it, therefore, is that which appears moſt ſerviceable and beſt conducive thereto. Whatſoever is more, cometh of Evil. A ſinful Defect it is, when we ſpeak leſs than theſe require; as though good Words coſt more than we owed to God and our Neighbour. Nor is it other than a ſinful Exceſs, when we ſpeak more than makes for theſe, (and, conſequently, muſt make againſt them;) as though our Tongues were Maſters, and not Servants; or Servants left to themſelves by God and Conſcience, to make as much unprofitable Noiſe as we liſt. I will not determine, which Spirit is the more unclean, the *Dumb* Devil or the *Talkative*. Both come from Hell, and both ſerve the Kingdom thereof.

This latter is ſhamed and condemned by the memorable Divine Proverbs; *In the multitude of Words, there wanteth not Sin; but he that refraineth his Lips is wiſe. He that hath Knowledg ſpareth his Words. But he that openeth wide his Lips, ſhall have Deſtruction.* Prov.10.19. & 17.27. & 13.3. Nature alſo, as well as Scripture, condemns this Exceſs of Speech. This Exceſs, againſt which it hath made very obſervable Proviſions: Giving us but one Inſtrument of Speech, though two of Hearing, and two of Sight. Not giving us the uſe of our one Tongue, neither, till we arrive unto the uſe of Reaſon in ſome meaſure. Alſo then ſetting Bounds to it, when we come to the Uſe of it; hedging it in with Rowes of Teeth. So that, we are plainly taught, if we will learn it, that we are to hear twice as much as we ſpeak in Converſes: Are to ſpeak no more than we underſtand good Reaſon for; And when we do otherwiſe, we do break

break Nature's Bounds. (Ἔπος φύγον Ἕρκος ὀδόντων, Hom. Iliad.) Wherefore,

All the World agrees, 'tis no Muſical Tongue that keeps not Time. Nor are Men found to love any Loquacity beſide their own; or their own it ſelf, under the Name of Exceſs. It's a common Obſervation, that the moſt Tedious Tongues have the leaſt Patient Ears; and the moſt Incontinent Talkers do not own their Love to hear themſelves talk. By which they betray their Self-condemnation; and ſhew how much their Judgment is againſt their Practice. And who thinks the Man wiſe, who condemns himſelf in a thing that he allows?

Be it further asked; who ever knew a Galloping Tongue, but it often Stumbled? One that running very much, fell not into Sin very oft? The Scripture foreſaid, is in every guilty

Company verified. The nimbleſt Wits are out-run by Tongues of Perpetual Motion. Much leſs can the ſtrongeſt Judgments keep pace with reſtleſs Ones, If the Mountains will be always in travail, Mice will be the inglorious Birth. The moſt admired Oracles of Eloquence, muſt ſpeak Traſh if they ſpeak to exceſs!

It is eaſily divined, how very ill this may be applied by corrupt Minds. By the *Impure, to whom all things are impure.* Thoſe who take not the Law againſt the Exceſs of any other Talk, are ſtill commencing vexatious Suits againſt that of Religious Talk. Againſt which, Scorners in their Chair, ſhaking with Laughter, will wreſt what is ſaid. Wherefore let Chriſtian Readers attend what follows.

Very poſſible indeed it is, that Religious Talk may be drawn forth to a ſinful Length. What is moſt laudable for the Matter, may be culpable

pable for the Meaſure; and is ſo, and is not for Edification, but againſt it, when Religious Prudence doth not gage it: When no Care is taken that Company be not Glutted, as well as that they be not Starved. But, alas! in our day, real Defects are reputed Exceſſes, generally. All Talk-of-another-World, Men would have confined to holy Days and conſecrated Places. Yea, and to Church-men and Bed-ridden ones. Thoſe that are one jot wiſer, and can reliſh a little when they can tend for it; do conclude that what exceedeth *Laodicean*'s Uſe, is Long; and what is Long, is Tedious; and what is Tedious to their Luſts, may be juſtly enough Odious to their Hearts. But, every Man is not a Thief, at whom Dogs do bark; or whom the Children in the Street call ſo. Nor is every Religious Talker a Sinful Oppreſſor of his Hearers, though he be named ſo by the Weak and the Wicked among them. Nor is all that they will call

ſo, Cant and Nonſenſe. Nor is it ſure that 'tis Vain-Glory, and not Godly-Zeal, doth act him, becauſe it's audaciouſly ſaid ſo by them. Or, that it is not his Duty to exceed their Deſires; and his Wiſdom and Kindneſs to do it, becauſe they do think otherwiſe. In ſhort; They that Fear God, will Speak often of him one to another; and very much. Even to an Exceſs of Carnal Mens Patience. Wittingly they will not extend their Talk of him, beyond what they believe to be for his Glory, and their Good. And, if, through inadvertence, they ſometimes do ſlip and fall into a peccant Prolixity, they will truly, upon Reflection, Humble their Souls: And beſeech their God to *take away that Iniquity*, among others, of *their holy things*. Nor is it to be doubted, but his rich Grace will Pardon their Failings, Accept their Services, Vindicate their Names, and in due time, Abaſe and Shame their Reproachers. But,

Upon

Upon the whole, it appears that we are Fooliſh when we make not Conſcience of Keeping Silence, as well as of Breaking it. And that it's our Duty to Pray the Holy Spirit to teach us alway, both to *Open our Mouths, and to Shut them, with Diſcretion!*

7. *Uncharitable Talk is Fooliſh.* Uncharitable, is what Poſitively or Negatively violates the Royal Law of Love: Love of Men for the Sake of God; true Love of all Men, and beſt Love of good Men, exemplified and required by the God of Love. He talketh Uncharitably, whoſe Talk flows not from Love, and tends not unto Kindneſs. Who either ſpeaks Evil of his Neighbour when no juſt occaſion is offered, or ſpeaks not well of him when opportunity is given!

A Folly moſt manifeſt, a Sin moſt mighty. For, a Practice it is, moſt Oppoſite to the Nature, and Inconſiſtent with the Tenor of Chriſtianity.

nity. Contrary to the principal Laws, and Deſtructive of the precious Fruits of its Spirit, and Grace. Inſomuch, that, if this Talk be not Fooliſh, to Renounce the Goſpel and our Baptiſm muſt be to be Wiſe. The Holy Ghoſt, expreſly and frequently, maketh this Talk the Property of the Wicked, and the Character of the Damned. Yea, and charges thoſe that hope for Heaven, *not to Eat with a Man of ſuch a Tongue*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. Declaring thereby, that as ſuch are excluded from Heaven, they are to be Excommunicated from the Church on Earth. That they are Dogs, to be Kept out of God's Lower Houſe and Upper one.

Nor need we lift up our Hands with any Wonder, if we open our Eyes with any Care; and look into the filth of an Uncharitable Mouth. It's a Superfluity of Naughtineſs, that maketh Silent of the Good, and Eloquent of the Evil of our Neighbours. It's

It's no leſs than Contempt and Hatred of God and Men, that is the true Cauſe and Spring. And, like Cauſe like Effects! This Talk fights againſt God, and murders Men; and of all Men, the Talkers themſelves. *It is a World of Iniquity*; full of Iniquity, as the World of things Viſible and Inviſible. *It Defiles the Body*; turns all the Members into Weapons of Unrighteouſneſs; makes Hands and Feet Swords and Spears. *Sets on fire the Courſe of Nature*; horribly deſtroys the whole Courſe of our Lives; takes away the Wheel of Humane Converſation: Quenches every relick-ſpark of Love, Infuſes more Hatred, Kindles more Malice, Inflames Wrath, Founds a Hell of Revenge; and *Makes the very Heaven and Earth of Friendſhip to paſs away.* Hence is it, that Earth, as Hell, is full of Weeping, Wailing, and Gnaſhing of Teeth. Of Strife and Clamor, of Tumult and Care, of Suſpicion and Fear, of Trouble and Danger, of Vexation and Regret.

gret. No Peace to them that are Uncharitably spoken of, no Peace in them that speak Uncharitably of them!

In them, who turn the sweetest Instrument of Kindness into the sharpest Weapon of Bitterness. Who by that excellent faculty of Speech, which distinguisheth them from Bruits, do make themselves far more Noxious Creatures. By that, which, next to God's Glory, was given us for our Neighbour's Good, do, to God's Dishonour, do them all manner of Evil; By that which God gave us to Counsel and Comfort them, do Defame and Disquiet them. Turning the great Gift of Tongues into the worst of Curses! A Folly, which we call Atheistical, by Scripture-Authority! *Swords are in their Lips*, i. e. They Talk Uncharitably. *Who say they shall hear us?* i. e. They deny the Deity, *Psal.* 59. 7. And vain are the Fig-Leaves, wherewith fond Fools would cover their Shame; *e.gr. We speak ill of none*

none but of ill Men. No? But, a higher than the Kings of the Earth ſaith, Speak Evil of no Man. *They ſpeak ill of us, of whom we ſpeak ill.* It may be ſo; but your Saviour, when he was Reviled, reviled not again. And his Sheep do not bark at Dogs when Dogs bark at them. *We ſpeak no more ill than we know of Men.* So much the leſs is your Sin; but it's a very great one, when your Charity covers not a Multitude of your Neighbours Sins! *We cannot but ſpeak ill when we are Angry.* No? It is the Unregenerate Tongue that no Man can tame. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty and Power; and there is putting away of Evil Speaking and of Anger: Of both the ill Child and Mother, of *Iſhmael* and of *Hagar*. *We ſpeak but ſuch ill words as break no Bones.* How know you that? but it's too much if you break your Neighbour's Peace in his Mind, and your own Peace in the higheſt King's Court. *We mean no hurt in the Ill we ſpeak.* Pity but

but you spake well, if you meant so. You construe others ill Words in ill Senses; and so will others construe yours. Men that are Good, do shun the very Appearance of Evil. *They be our Inferiours of whom we speak ill; and if we wrong them, we recompence them.* A Rare Restraint, and most Unfrequent Restitution! But, what if made, both of 'em? It is he that is void of Understanding that despiseth any Neighbour. He only who dares despise his Maker, dares to mock the Poor. Nor can any Hands heal some Wounds that are given by Tongues. *We speak ill of some Men, as constrained to it by the Love of God.* How good is it to be sure that we are not in an Errour, when we presume that we do well? It is possible to speak wickedly for God. And it's sure, though you do speak for him, it is wickedly, if you speak without his Call, and speak not according to his Rule. You dishonour and displease him your King, if without his Warrant,

Warrant, you inflict a deſerved Puniſhment on your Fellow-Subjects. Nor will he take ſuch an Uſurpation of undue Power, for a token of your Love. And, ſuppoſing that you have indeed his Commiſſion, and thereby a juſt right to Sentence your Neighbour; making him that has done ill to hear ill; alike Criminal you will be found, if you tranſgreſs his Laws of Equity, Humanity, and Pity. If you ſay more than you Know; if what you Know, you ſpeak maliciouſly, without Compaſſion, and to ill Purpoſes!

What a Malefactor was *Achan*? and what a Storm raiſed he to the Publick? What a Lover of his God was *Joſhua*, how True, how Zealous? But with what words doth *Joſhua* fall upon *Achan*? *My Son!* What Balm more benign, what Oil more gentle? *I pray thee!* How courteous is the Mouth of Love to the moſt Unlovely? And that from the Seat of

of the highest Authority. *Give Glory to God, and make Confession.* What Pity is here and Bounty? Pity of a perishing Creature, and Bounty in instructing and exhorting that he might not perish. *Why hast thou Troubled us?* No Railing Accusation; a Blow no harder than might serve to awaken Conscience. *The Lord will Trouble thee.* No Insultation, no Imprecation. Not, the Curse of God take thee, *&c.* O imitable Example! and worthy of all Acceptation.

See Dr. Barrow, *in Loc.*

In short; as much as our Age does abound in this Uncharitable Talk, and the rather because it doth so, it must be said: He that utters it, is a Fool. Slander, is as truly Sin and Folly, as either Murder or Adultery. Nor is Bearing false Witness the only Kind of Slander, though it be the most gross. *Affixing of reproachful Names* upon innocent Persons, is Slandering. So is *Aspersing their Actions*

Actions with Scornfully-expreſſed-Cenſures. So is *Perverting their Words* by affected Miſconſtructions. So is *Repreſenting their Words or Deeds but partially*, ſuppreſſing ſome part to blemiſh the whole. So is *Inſtilling ſly Suggeſtions*, apt to breed unworthy opinions of them. So is *Reflecting on them ever ſo covertly*, with deſign to faſten a reproach by it. So is *Aggravating their faults out of meaſure*, and making Beams of their Motes. So is *Charging of them with the ill Conſequences of their Judgment, which they themſelves aver they do not ſee, and proteſt they do much abhor.* And ſo is the *Aiding and Abetting, and being foſter-fathers unto any Slanderous Reports.* Nor, are Slanderous Ears much leſs odious to God or Wiſe Men, than Slanderous Tongues. Thoſe Receivers ſeem as bad as theſe Thieves.

See Dr. *Barrow*, on *Prov.* 10. 18.

And it's more than probable, that all the Guilty would ſtrait-way find

themselves to be Uncharitable; could they but bring their Minds to reflect better upon their Principles and Ends. To consider what it really is, that makes Evil-speaking the far greatest part of their Talk; (as Talk is, out of question, the much biggest Imployment of their Life.) They would find, that either an in-rooted Ill-will, or a rash Anger; an old Spite or a newly raised Spleen, brought their Neighbours Faults into their Mouths. That either Contempt of Men, as thought hugely below them; or Envy at them, as supposed someway above themselves, was the common Parent of their disparaging Talk. That ever and anon Coveting hath brought them to Slandering; and they have for no other reason disgraced others, but that they might enrich themselves. That, not unfrequently, Wantonness hath given the rise to their Calumny; nor have they for any thing but Sport murdred Men in their Credit. Yea, and that,

that, ſometimes, there has certainly been a much more abſtruſe cauſe; pure Malignity and Love of Inhumanity without any formed Reaſon: which has made them bite their Neighbours, meerly to gratify their curriſh Humours, juſt as other Mad-dogs do. A Diſpoſition that is more common, than is well thought of or Prayed againſt. One Planted in corrupt Nature, watred by the Example of all the World, and Encreaſed by Mens own aſſiduous Uſe. But,

Of Uncharitable Talkers come not into the Secret, O my Soul; unto their Aſſembly, mine Honour, be not thou United!

I proceed to enquire nextly,

§. 2. What is *Fooliſh Jeſting?*

Fooliſh-Talking, or Jeſting, ſaith the Text; that is, or *Jeſting which is Fooliſh.* And, it may be, the Senſe deſigned is ſomewhat more; *q. d.*

" Deteſt ye Fooliſh-talking, of all " Kinds; even Jeſting it ſelf, that " Admired and Beloved one; that " Alamode and Sugared one. Abhor " Fooliſh Talk the Meat, yea, and " Jeſts that are the Sawce. It is ſurely predicated of both, that they are (ἀνήκοντα) Not Pertinent, or conducible to any good Purpoſe; but only ſerve very ill ones. Are inſufferable therefore in Jeſus Chriſt's School, as hath been aforeſaid.

By *Jeſting*, all Men underſtand *Speech framed and intended for Mirth.* Talk, is the Buſineſs of the Lips; Jeſts, are their Play. Speaking, is their Trade; Jeſting, is their Game. In That, they do but make a Noiſe; in This, they make Muſick. That, is the Employment; This, the Recreation, they give their Hearers. And as of other *Recreations*, it muſt be ſaid of *Jeſts*; No doubt but ſome are Lawful, yea, Needful; and unto ſome Men they are a Duty, ſay the graveſt

veſt Caſuiſts. When it is that they are our Duty and Wiſdom, and when our Folly and our Sin, is to be judged by the ſame Rules.

Lawful Recreation, is ſome Action not forbidden; apt to exhilarate the Fancy, or exerciſe the Body, ſo as to whet the Sithe of both, for Sacred and Civil Work. And *Lawful Jeſting*, is ſome innocent Expreſſion, apt to raiſe drooping Spirits, and ſharpen blunted Minds, ſo as to mend their Plight for all good Service. All is one, whether it be by its Beauty, or its Rarity; whether by its Perſpicuity, or Abſtruſity, an Expreſſion ſo inſtilleth Pleaſure, and reneweth Vigor. Thus may an holy *Iſaac Sport* with his *Rebecca*; *Laugh*, as the Hebrew; *Play*, as the Chaldee; *Jeſt*, as the Syriack and Arabick ſpeak. All that can be ſaid for Melancholy-Chriſtians of another Mind, is, that their Error erreth upon the Right hand. He that is no otherwiſe a

Jeſter, is far from being a Fool; and he that is contradictiouſly Moroſe, therein, is not Wiſe. *Broken Spirits dry our Bones*, and unfit us to fight the Lord's Battels. *Merry Hearts do good like generous Medicines*; and ſtrengthen both for Spiritual Warfare, and for Secular Merchandiſe.

A τρέπω ſeu ἀπὸ τῆς τρόπων.

The (εὐτραπελία) word, *Jeſting*, is originally of no ill Signification; the Abuſe hath brought it into diſrepute, as the anciently honorable Name of *Tyrant*; and very many others. Our Wiſdom will be, neither to be Frighted with the harſh ſound of its Name, among our ſelves; nor be Charmed with its Magnificent Titles, found in Pagan Moraliſts. But, leſs regardful of its *Denomination*, ever to mind its *Nature, End, and Uſe*. By them, forming our Judgments of it. Briefly then, All that are Hatched of Forbidden words are Fooliſh Jeſts; ſuch as are Irreligious, are more Mad than Facetious. And

And if Eating and Drinking without aiming at God's Glory, be fooliſh; Jeſting, without that Deſign, cannot be Wiſe. Holy Intention, is eſſential to all Moral Good, and is the ſavour of it. *If the Salt of Jeſts be without that ſavour, they be good for nothing, but to be caſt out.* But we will be more particular;

1. *Profane Jeſting is Fooliſh.* Prating looſely about things that are Holy. Trifling with the Names, whereat Heaven and Earth trembles. Making Sport with the aweful Word, by which we muſt be judged. A certain Effect of worſt Cauſes, and as ſure a Cauſe of worſt Effects. For, nothing leſs than a Reign of Sin, can make a Play of Religion. Nor can it be, but Playing with Religion, muſt needs heighten Sins Dominion. Only Contempt of Sacred Things, can breed jocular Familiarity: and that worſe than Deviliſh Familiarity greatens the Contempt. I ſay, *worſe than Deviliſh*;

Deviliſh; for though Profane Men Believe and Jeſt, *Devils do Believe and Tremble.* If Profane Wits believe not that there is a God, they are blinder than Heathens. If they do believe there is one, they are, on this account, more mad than Devils. And who, ſave mad and blind Men, can think it valuable Wit, to make God and Men one's Enemies for Merriment? expoſe one's ſelf to Everlaſting Fire, for a fit of Laughter. Once a Merry Atheiſt, never a Sober Chriſtian, ſaith Dr. *Hammond.*

2. *Unclean Jeſting is Fooliſh.* The Holy Ghoſt hath named Obſcenity, very *Folly*; and called words of Smut, *Rotten* and *Corrupt.* What an extream Phrenzy then is it, ever ſo wittily to commit this Folly, to Spue forth worſe than Street-Dirt, and name it a Fine Sport? But hereunto riſe none, ſave higheſt Graduats in the Univerſity of Wickedneſs. Wherefore I advance but this ſingle Thought; *God's Law*, in old time,

time, *required cutting off of the Hand, which did an Indecent Act to ſave the neareſt Relation's Life*; Deut. 25. 11. And hereby we may eaſily judg of his Wrath againſt the Mouth, that utters Unclean words, for nothing but at once to Diſport and Debauch its Hearers.

Dura Lex in ſpeciem, ſed ex cujus rigore liqet qantopere Deo placet Verecundia; & qantùm abominatur Impudentiam. Calv.

3. *Unnatural Feſting is Fooliſh.* That which makes merry with the Sins, and ſporteth with the Miſeries of Men. That plays upon their Miſdeeds; and taunts at their Parts, their infirm Bodies, or mean Conditions, and particular Diſaſters. A Practice ſo horrid, that it would be as Impoſſible as Unrighteous; did not Men together put off the Humane, and put on Diabolical Nature. For Humanity will Compaſſionate, not Patratragediate, on a Stray or a Faln-beaſt, and it cannot draw mirth from the Miſery of a Man. There is a Beaſt,

and

and none of the gentleſt neither, which they ſay ſheddeth Tears over them whom it Devours. But a gentle one it is, and a moſt merciful Creature, compared to this Kind of Jeſter. For, there is a Clemency in thoſe that wound us Modeſtly; nor is he near ſo much the Tyrant that doth us our wrongs, as he who Mocks at us for them. The firſt gives the Wound; but it's this Second that makes it Smart, and Kill. In ſhort; he is rather a Stock than a Man that deplores not Evil, but more a Devil than a Man that derides it. And his monſtrous Mirth is ſeldom long from a Hell above Ground.

4. *Immoral Jeſting is Fooliſh.* In all things, the Wiſdom that is from above requires good Manners. Whereinſoever they are not found, good Conſcience is loſt. It's Aſleep, Blind, or Dead. The fifth Commandment is without Reſtriction; 'tis not ſaid, *Honour thy Father and Mother in all*

Talk,

Talk, except Raillery. Or, *Speak not Evil of Dignities, in any Diſcourſe but Drolling.* Or, *Honour all Men, unleſs while you are Jeſting.* Wherefore they make an unwiſe Bargain, who ſell God and Mens Peace for the Muſick of their Jeſt. For the tickle of their Fancies, in prejudicial and diſgraceful Gibes. For the luſcious, but prodigious Pleaſure of a Waſp, to Sting others and Kill it ſelf.

5. *Unprofitable Jeſting is Fooliſh.* I mean, That which is not as truly intended, and deſired for a Whet to our Minds; as our Eating is intended for Nouriſhment, and Sleeping for Refreſhment, to our Bodies. That wherein Religious Profit is not deſigned; nor any thing more, than the tranſient Pleaſure of a Laugh and Giggle. A Sorry thing; and below any Ambition, ſave that of *Children*; who *prefer their Toy above the Tower of London*, as the Proverb ſpeaks. It would be ask'd, what Underſtanding

is in them, should Men use other Whetstones, without Thought or Care whether their Instruments were sharpned at all by them? and for nothing, but an unaccountable Delight taken in Grinding for nothing. A practice which would soon so sensibly and notoriously grind them to the Dust and Depth of Poverty, and Scorn among Men. Awake Conscience, and say whether all Jesters grind to fetch an Edg, or no!

Particularly, I appeal to God's Register in the Hearts of such, as grind in the Game of *Chess*. That *operose Syntax of Jests*; by which, let them say, whether they find their Minds more Sharpned, or Blunted, for Business Civil or Sacred? Wondrous it seems, that the Board whereon Men Strain their Thoughts as hard as the Mechanick on his Shopboard, or the Lawyer or Divine on his Desk, should be taken for a *Recreation* of them; any more, than carrying of Sacks of Corn

Corn on one's Back, ſhould be reputed a Sport for the Body's Refreſhment. But Witchcraft there is in all Error; Candles-Ends and Coals be Sweet-meats, when Girls are in a Pica. And, Rowling in the Dirt doth a wanton Boy's heart good. Wracks, are Recreations, if Men fancy them ſuch.

This Game, ſaith one, *is not only Lawful, but, it may be, the moſt Ingenious and Delightful that ever was invented.* I hope, he Dreamed not, that, the more Ingenious the more Lawful; and the more Delightful to his Fancy, the more undoubtedly Harmleſs and Innocent in it ſelf. He knows, how Witty, the worſt of Creatures is; and how Sweet, abundance of Forbidden Fruit! Well, but, after that, he droppeth theſe more memorable words: " *Many precious Hours* " *have I profuſely ſpent in this Game;* " *and, It is a Time-waſter. It hath* " *had with me a Faſcinating Property;*

" *I have*

" *I have been Bewitched by it. When*
" *I have Begun, I have not had the*
" *Power to Give over. I will not Use*
" *it, till I find I can Refuse it. Rea-*
" *son and Religion shall order my Re-*
" *creation. It hath not done with me,*
" *when I have done with it. In my*
" *Study, in my Pulpit, when I have*
" *been Praying or Preaching, I have,*
" *in my Thoughts been Playing of Chess.*
" *I have had as it were a Chess-board*
" *before my Eyes. I have been think-*
" *ing how I might have obviated the*
" *Stratagem of my Antagonist* (or
" Play-Mate.) *I have heard of one,*
" *who, as appeared by his Words, was*
" *in his Thoughts playing at Chess, as*
" *he lay Dying. It hath caused me*
" *(this Game hath) to break many so-*
" *lemn Vows and Promises; and often*
" *to Prevaricate sinfully. It hath*
" *wounded my Conscience and broken my*
" *Peace. Were I now to Die, the re-*
" *membrance of this Game would great-*
" *ly Trouble me. As it did* John Huss,
" *a little before his Death.* [One would
think

think ſuch a Burnt Child ſhould make us all to dread this Fire; but he thus proceeds] " *My Uſing this Game hath* " *been Scandalous and Offenſive unto* " *others: Godly Friends have been* " *Grieved. Others (I have reaſon to* " *fear) have been Hardned by it. My* " *Uſing it hath occaſioned much Paſ-* " *ſion, Strife, Idle, if not, Lying Words;* " *the Neglect of many Duties to God* " *and Men. My Uſing it ſhows, I have* " *little Self-denial. It is altogether* " *Unneceſſary to me; it hinders my* " *Soul's health, and furthers not my* " *my Body's. It hath occaſioned Ex-* " *pence; I ſhould think much to give* " *that to Relieve others, that I have* " *waſted this way upon my Wanton-* " *neſs.* He concludes with excellent words of the Maſter of Chriſtian Sentences, Mr. *Baxter:* " I know not " one of many Hundreds, that need- " eth any Game at all.---The Tem- " per of Chriſt and his beſt Servants " have been far from Games and " Sports.---I ſee but Few, but Diſtaſte

" in

" in *Ministers*, even Shooting, Bowl-
" ing, and the Healthful Games.-
" Therefore there is somewhat in
" others that Nature it self hath
" some Suspicion of. In such other
" Games as fit not the End of Re-
" creations. That Student that needs
" *Chess* or *Cards* to please his Mind,
" I doubt hath a Carnal empty Mind.
" And his Disease should be rather
" Cured, than Pleased. *Aurea men-*
" *tis bracteatæ Verba.*

Reader; Can thy Charity reach to believe, that this *Reverend Penitent* designs his Spiritual Benefit, if he returns to his Chess-Board? Or, that other Christians can easily think thee to be sincere, if thou pretendest to seek renovation of thy Strength for thy Duty, from a Game which evidently Wearies, Weakens, and Wastes Spirits? For thy Life look well to thy Aims, in Jests and Games! And, for Shame, acknowledge this bright Truth; that Playing (and very

Praying

Praying alſo) is Sinful Folly, when Aims and Ends in them are not Wiſe! Let the Matter be what it will; whereinſoever, the Pleaſure of the *Fleſh* is, for it ſelf, *Sought*, it is *Served*; and in whatſoever it is Served, the *World* and *Devil* are Served alſo; for, *their Intereſts are Conjunct and Undivided.*

6. *Immoderate Jeſting is Fooliſh.* That is Immoderate, which is uſed in Times prohibited; ſpends more time than is allowed; and is without any Serious thing immixed.

There is a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from the Embraces, of this ſort of Speech. The *Lord's-Day*, is a *Temporary-Heaven*, into which nothing ſo Playful may enter. And other times there are, which require our ſevereſt Compoſures of Spirit, and admit not its relaxations. Though we may *not Faint*, neither may we be Frolic, *in a Day of Adverſity.* When we addreſs unto Solemn Worſhip at

any time, it behoves us to go with fear and trembling. When we are among Perſons Afflicted, and needing Commiſeration; to Jeſt and Sport, is to intimate that we are glad of their Hurt; and is directly to foment their Grief. He is a Glutton of them, who cannot abſtain from Jeſts upon ſuch Faſting-Days. On which, every Sally of his Sportive Wit, is not a *dead Fly*, but dead Oxe *in his Ointment*. But,

So is he alſo Immoderate, who at any time whatever, ſpends more Hours in Tuning of his Inſtrument, than Uſing it. In Whetting his Sythe, than in Mowing. In Baiting of his Horſe, than in Riding. As though Paſtime were the *Chriſtian-Name* of Jeſting; and as if it had been ſaid, *Six days ſhalt thou, not Labour, but Play.*

But is all Jeſting Sober, that is in no Unſeaſonable time, and is but of an Hour long? No, by no means. He is no Temperate and Wiſe Man, that, for half an Hour together, eats nothing

nothing but Sawce, or Speaks nothing but Jeſts. Salts and Sawces are not to be ate by themſelves; Recreative Jeſts are ſuch fare. Unwholſome ſurely, without ſomewhat more Subſtantial taken with it. Some grave Sentences among the light Kickſhaws. Somewhat that may ſhow the Jeſter to be no ſuch *Ape*, as is not *Man* and *Chriſtian*; and his Language, when moſt Merry, to be bridled by a Heart that is Wiſe. Somewhat that may both work and witneſs this rare Effect; that in the Recreation of our Minds, the Buſineſs of our Lives doth not go ſo far from them, as to be long out of them. In ſhort; he who indulgeth Fancy any more Jeſting than this, his Jeſting as truly ſets his Conſcience to Sleep as his Fancy to Play.

7. *Oſtentatious Jeſting is Fooliſh.* Of all Sins, Pride is the moſt Sinful; and therefore the moſt Silly. And of all Pride, there is ſcarcely a more fooliſh, than Pride of Skill to play this Game.

True, our Age wonders after it; prizes nothing ſo much. Men value themſelves upon it; and therefore luſt to be ſhowing it. But,

For this appears no more Reaſon, than the poor Ruſtick had, for his Perſwaſion; that being Condemned to Die, his King would never let him be Executed, becauſe he had ſo Rare a Knack of Whiſtling. No more reaſon, than Children have to admire themſelves for being Artiſts at Puſh-pin. Arts, both of them, which have leſs corrupted the World and perverted Mankind, than Jeſting hath done. Worthy therefore, if not of more Honour, yet of leſs Diſgrace. In a word, I ask;

Were they not born among the Cattel of the Field; at leaſt, diſclaim they not the Privilege of a Nobler Birth, who look upon Reaſon as of leſs worth? Reaſon, their Likeneſs to Angels, of leſs worth than Jeſting, their Similitude to Apes and Sportive Brutes. Reaſon, that in Conjunction with Grace,

Grace, doth all that is Good and Great for both Worlds; of leſs Worth than Freakiſh Wit, which doth its utmoſt, when it Unknits a Brow, Shakes a Spleen, and lets fall a drop of Oil on Reaſon's Wheel. Such Men, if they may be ſtyled Men, do want little more than Hair and Horns to make them Beaſts. For the ſame Wiſdom it is, to break Jeſts for the praiſe of great Parts, and to bring forth Counters for the praiſe of great Eſtates. This is Self-evident, and no more ſhall be added, but this; My need of Medicines can prove me to be but an *Infirm* Man; my Pride of taking them would prove me a *Mad* one. No Jeſting is Lawful but what is Medicinal, and reſtorative of Spirits for nobler Thoughts. My Need hereof, is but my common Infirmity; my Pride of it would be my perfect Phrenzy.

It is time that we now enquire,

§. 3. What makes Fooliſh-Talking and Fooliſh-Jeſting ſo Deteſtable as our Doctrine ſpeaks?

A Needleſs Queſtion this were, but that, if any where, here Wicked *Love*, like Sacred, will *Believe no Evil*. Againſt theſe their Darling Sins and *Dalilahs*, Men will not believe their Eyes. Theſe Plagues of Leproſy have been all along proved, as well as pronounced ſuch. Nor have the Arguments been too ſhort for the Cenſures; but the Diſcoveries have juſtified the Invectives. Nevertheleſs, Meaſure preſſed down and running over ſhall be given. I may be Vile in ſome Eyes for having ſaid ſo much already; but I ſhall ſay more, and *I will yet be more Vile*, if by any means I may gain ſome: And bring them to a wiſer Heart and purer Language.

In Fooliſh Talking and Jeſting; Sins of common occurrence to all Men, and of daily occurrence to every one; it ſhall

ſhall be briefly ſaid, what, in general, *All Men do*; and, in ſpecial, *What Good Men do.*

1. *All Men Sin.* In the fore-deſcribed Talks and Jeſts, they really (and may I not ſay, confeſſedly?) Sin. And, conſequently, in the ſame, they do the worſt that Creatures can do: Sin, is Man's Worſt done againſt God.

They Contemn the Supream King's Authority; and deny him to be Lord over their Tongue.

They Uſurp his Government; and, Depoſing God, ſet up themſelves to Reign in his ſtead. Subjecting their Lips to their own Luſts; inſtead of the Divine Laws. And ſhould Duſt and Aſhes ſo ſet up themſelves?

They Deny God's Propriety in them; conſtructively ſaying, their Tongues (and, therefore, their Whole Perſons) are their own. The Clay is its own; and what hath the Potter to do with it? Helliſh Conceit!

They Believe not his VViſdom; but ſay in Effect, they have found out a better Language than the Holy Tongue which he hath taught. Thus wiſer is Darkneſs than Light; and thus do things of Yeſterday take themſelves for more Prudent than the Ancient of Days.

They Diſown his Goodneſs; conſtructively ſaying, they be Cruel Laws he hath laid on their Lips. As if Reaſon and Religion bloodily galled their Mouths. And, as though our heavenly Law-giver loved us ſo very little as we love our ſelves.

They Confeſs not his Mercies and Benefits; but deny themſelves to be ſo much in his Debt, as to owe him the rule of their Mouth. Alas, what have they, that they have conſidered themſelves to have received of God? And do they owe any Debt of Gratitude? Is Life, and the Means of Eternal Bliſs ſuch a Matter, as that for them one's Lips ſhould be ſtill praiſing the Giver? They believe it not.

They

They Deſpiſe Divine Promiſes and Threats; and interpretatively tell the World, that Earth out-bids Heaven. Makes firmer or greater Promiſes, for Vain words, than the Goſpel makes unto Savoury ones: And thunders more fearful Threats againſt Edifying Diſcourſe, than the Goſpel doth againſt Corrupt Communication. For, alas, is Hell ſuch a Little-Eaſe? And is Heaven ſo great a Preferment? No, not in their ſight.

They Reject God's very Intreaties; and ſay in a manner, Though he doth Pray and Beſeech them to Speak Wiſely, they will not grant him. No; that wondrous Condeſcention ſhall not move them; that miraculous Good ſhall not overcome their Evil. For, why; if All-mightineſs will court Worms, muſt they preſently be won? Nay, they are not. To turn Grace into Wantonneſs they are Wiſe; but, for Grace, to turn from Wantonneſs they have no Knowledg.

They give the Lie to Eternal Truth: Virtually ſaying, that the Fountain of Truth is the Father of a Lie, when he ſaith that an unbridled Tongue can have but a Vain Religion. What? cannot they with the ſame Mouth bleſs and curſe? Cannot their Fountain ſend forth ſweet Water and bitter? They will not believe themſelves to be Leopards, becauſe of theſe Spots of their Lips.

They put the Son of God to open Shame: Telling him in the Rhetorick of Practice, that they cannot think the Blood ſhed of his Heart, to have deſerved his Lording it over their Mouth. No; and if he expect to command the Doors thereof, he ſhall fail of it. What? is Redemption ſuch a Kindneſs, that the Redeemed muſt never ſpeak but as the Redeemer pleaſes? They have other Thoughts.

They do Deſpite to the Spirit of Grace: Telling him, that though they hear of his Divine Eſſence and Wonderful Office; yet, if his Striving with them be

to

to circumciſe their Lips, they ſhall ſtrive againſt him, and not ſo eaſily part with thoſe Fore-Skins. Indeed his Coming to fit us for Heaven was friendly done; but he exacts too much, they think, if he look to have ſo perpetual Acknowledgments.

They Reproach the Divine VVord, and the Seals of it: They make them ill ſpoken of; and cauſe Men to ask, To what End is your Reading the Word, and ſo much Hearing of it? Of what Uſe is your Baptiſm? and who is ever the better for the Lord's Supper? The Mouth utters the Heart; and who among you is any cleaner than Infidels in the Mouth?

They Imitate Satan and Pleaſe him: As he, ſo they, are Evil-Speakers. A Likeneſs to him, which cannot but highly pleaſe him; it doth ſo extraordinarily ſerve his Intereſt, and manifeſt his Empire.

They Murder their own Souls: For Sin's Wages is Death. Tongues ſet on Fire of Hell, muſt bear Fire in Hell.

And

And they, who will not here with holy Waters cleanſe them, ſhall not there have a Drop of Water to cool them.

They endanger the Lives of all that come into their Companies: For Poiſon may be drank in at the Ears, and theſe fill the Ears of their Companions with it.

They Rob and Steal perpetually: Rob God of his Glory; themſelves, of the Reward that there is in uſing our Tongues to glorify him; and their Friends, of innumerable good things. Theſe they rob, one while of their Purity; imparting to them a Filth, which coſts many a Prayer and Tear to ſcour it out: other-whiles, of their Patience, which is their Souls very Manſion-houſe: but always of their Golden Hours, and convertible unto glorious Uſes.

They bear falſe Witneſs againſt Holineſs: For they take forbidden Words and Jeſts into their Mouths, purely to pleaſe themſelves. Nor ſtick they to ſay, that this is the main Pleaſure that they know under the Sun. Which is plainly

plainly enough to ſay, God's Commandments are very grievous, and Chriſt's Yoke is an uneaſy one; and it is in Breaking of his Commands that we can find any Comforts.

They wage a wilful War againſt God, and Men, and themſelves: Sin fights againſt all; and it's wilfully that Men do Sin: Without God Tempting, without Satan Compelling, without any Creature Forcing. The worſt Flattery, and all Force uſed with them, is their own. In Fooliſh Talks and Jeſts, it is moſt freely that Fools ſhoot their Bolts; and at no fewer Marks or leſſer. But, it remains to be ſaid, that in theſe twain;

2. *Godly Men do moſt aggravatedly ſin.* They incurring theſe Guilts, do preſent us with the moſt prodigious Sights. They, committing theſe Sins, are as follows in theſe Particulars.

They are Perſons choſen to Glory, Rejecting him who Elected them thereunto. Putting God out of the Throne, who

of

of moſt free Grace hath appointed unto them a Kingdom. In fooliſh Talk, they turn to the fooliſh God of this World; and forſake him who is God and their God.

They are Redeemed-Captives, ſlighting him who died not for the World as he died for them. Refuſing to let him give Law to ſo much as their Lips.

They are Creatures raiſed from the Dead, deſpiſing him that Quickned them: As not vouchſafing to obey him in very Words; and as far as very Scribes and Phariſees do.

They are Pardoned Malefactors, diſhonouring the moſt Gracious King that hath Forgiven them Ten thouſand Sins. Yea, Ten thouſand times Ten thouſand ſinful Thoughts, Words and Works.

They are Adopted Heirs, Provoking to wrath their Adoptive Father. Uttering, in his Preſence, and in Mens Hearing alſo, Words that he cannot away with.

They are Cleanſed-Lepers, making themſelves unclean again. Defiling anew the Temple of God; and in that which

which is named the very *Glory* of it. The Tongue is ſo called.

They are ſuch, as, being Night and Day accuſed in the Court of Heaven, have but one Interceſſor; and yet are Incenſing him againſt them. Walking contrarily unto him, in whoſe Lips no Guile was found; and the Grace of whoſe Lips, all Men admired!

They are Comforted Souls, grieving their holy Comforter. Making him, by their offenſive Breath, to keep far off from them; and to carry it, as kindeſt Friends uſe to do, when our Words much diſpleaſe them.

They are Men that live by Hope, and yet ſin againſt the only VVord whereon they do, or dare to hope. Their Poſſeſſion is nothing to their Reverſion; it is in Hope that they rejoice. Hope of the Glory promiſed in that Covenant, which promiſeth none at all but to them that obey the Goſpel in Word and Deed.

They are Sworn-Men, breaking their Oaths and Vows unto God. Their Vows, Sacra-

Sacramental, and less solemn ones many, to speak as well as act, by God's Rule and for his Glory.

They are Seers, and Children of Light, sinning against Light and Knowledg. Against Light more Heavenly and of a nobler kind, than any unregenerate Men are endued with.

They are strong Men, and invincible by World and Devil; throwing themselves down under Divine Wrath. The Grace first infused into every Convert, makes him certainly able to walk acceptably with God; according to the Grace of the New-Covenant. O what a Sight is it, when, not a Child falls of Weakness; but, a Giant throws himself down a Precipice!

They are Professors of Purity, wallowing in Mire. What Protestant-Christian professeth not, to take Christ's Word for the Rule of his Words, as well as Thoughts and Actions? Or who doth doubt, but foolish Talks and Jests are hereto most repugnant?

They

They are Petitioners unto Heaven, Men that give themſelves unto Prayer; no more able to live without Praying, than without Breathing: and yet do by contrary words chaſe away the Spirit, deaden the Grace, and leſſen the Gift of Prayer. Extream Madneſs! to diſable themſelves for that, by which they fetch from Heaven all they want.

They are Men often Reproved, kicking againſt the Pricks thereof. They have a hundred Rebukes for every one that an unregenerate Man hath. The Holy Ghoſt, their Conſcience, their Paſtor, their Pious Companions, muſt be ſuppoſed ever and anon checking them.

They are ſuch as have been enriched by Diamonds, and yet prefer Bits of Glaſs. Where is any Godly Man, but he has ſometimes heard and ſometimes ſpoke a good Word; which, for all the World he would not but have ſpoke and heard? After this, to take up Fooliſh Talks, is, after Gold tried to prefer Counters.

They are Children that have been Burnt, and yet fear not the Fire. I take it for granted, that Fooliſh Talks and Jeſts, have coſt all good Men dear, at one time or other. Have blotted their Evidences, expell'd their Comforts, raiſed their Fears, torn their Hearts. And what? will they ſin more, that worſe things may come?

They are ſuch as Revive, what they have took abundance of pains to Kill. Sure, there is no ſincere Convert, but what has laboured hard among his other Spiritual Enemies, to mortify thoſe flying Serpents that proceed from the Lips, and to ſpoil the breed of them.

They are Men that moſt of all deceive Expectation. They have a good Treaſure, and all People look that their Tongues ſhould bring forth good things. From Dogs we expect but Barking; and from Monkeys nothing wiſer than Laughing. In the Mouth of a Saint, it's expected there ſhould be the Tongue of an Angel. It is, at leaſt, monſtrous, if Doves gaggle as Geeſe, or Sheep bark as Dogs. *They*

They are, finally, *Lambs that murder more than VVolves.* Indeed, Sin, especially Sin of the Tongue, is a catching Disease. But from none is it so very deeply and dangerously taken, as from Men of real or reputed Religion. Their Sins are the most deadly Examples; as it were, so many Warrants for other Mens Sins. If they sin audaciously, many conclude they may then sin by Authority, (ȣ̀ τἀῦτα σθένει λόγος, ἐκ Ἀδοξȣ́ντων ἰὼν κ̀ Δοκȣ́ντων, ἀῦτος, Eurip. Hecub.) There be those whom the Foolish Talk of another's Mouth shall not hurt; but if it come out of yours, it shall debauch. Do we not daily find it? Some Mens Names are Swords and Bucklers for other Mens Sins. But to conclude.

§. 4. What are the Truths to be inferred, and what the Duties to be pressed from this Doctrine?

Of the Truths that I hence infer, these are all I shall offer; having already trespassed against the Brevity intended.

Tr. 1. *Our Tongues are not our own.* No, but our Lips are under Law, as well as our Hearts and Hands. For, if God be not Lord over them, how comes he to give the Law in my Text, unto them? And in the Day of Judgment, to Juſtify and to Condemn, according to our Words? *Mat.* 12. 37. It is not more ſure that God hath made Man's Mouth, than it is that he hath made a Law for it.

T. 2. *Metals are known by their Sounds.* Hearts are diſcovered by Talks, to be Silver or Braſs. For God the Judg of them, declareth that he doth hereby judg them. And accounteth fooliſh Talkers and Jeſters to be Men of impure Hearts, as truly as Fornicators; and the Covetous, which are Idolaters. If Mouths ſpeak of Wiſdom, and Tongues talk of Judgment, it argues that the Law of God is in the Heart; *Pſal.* 37. 30. But, if the Tongue be not bridled, it is ſure the Heart is not ſanctified; and the varniſhed Religion

is

is vain; *Jam.* 1. 26. In Nature and Morality, it's a ſure Rule; Stinking Breath is from foul Stomachs.

T. 3. *Words be Treaſonable.* By the Goſpel-Law they are ſo. For my Text makes all fooliſh Ones to be Mortal Sins; *i. e.* To be worthy of Death. Mens Proverb ſaith, *VVords are but VVind*; but the Divine Proverb ſaith, They do blow Life or Death. *He that keepeth his Mouth keepeth his Life, but he that openeth wide his Lips ſhall have Deſtruction*, Prov. 10. 19. And, *Death and Life are in the Power of the Tongue*, Prov. 18. 21.

T. 4. *Heaven and Earth are at a huge Diſtance.* God and this Rebel-world, are of moſt contrary Minds. For my Text declares that God cannot bear, the Talks which they cannot leave. No, but addict themſelves to, and affect and prize as the Melody of their Lives. His Soul hateth their Fooliſh Talks, and their Souls loath this Text and all its Parallels. Who then can pleaſe Men, and be the Servant of

Christ? *Gal.* 1. 10. Without becoming a Fool in the World's Repute, who can become Wise in God's Esteem? 1 *Cor.* 3. 18. Holy Lips, are a *Thread of Scarlet*, Cant. 4. 3. This Thread, in God's Sight, is a rich Ornament; in the World's Eye, it's only fit for a Fool's Coat. In short, we cannot have God's Approbation, but we must bear the World's Blame. The World thinks every Man's Folly wonderful, when he forsakes what God pronounceth abominable; *Luk.* 16. 15. 1 *Pet.* 4. 4.

T. 5. *Diamonds have their Clouds.* The truest Israelites have somewhat of the Botch of *Egypt*. Horrid Spots are ever and anon found on very Nazarites Lips. For, foolish Talks and Jests are detestable; and yet there is not a just Man on Earth that is perfectly free from them. Though every Saint be pressing on toward Perfection, there is not any one hath already attained it; *Phil.* 3. 12, 14. There is not one upon Earth, that never offendeth in word. O by what Grace is it, that an *Usher*, an *Owen*, a *Baxter* is saved? T. 6.

T. 6. *The Horſes in* Pharaoh's *Chariots, need Bridles in their Mouths.* The Phraſe that I uſe is Chriſt's own, *Cant.* 1. 9. Believers are ſo called for Spiritual Strength and Beauty. *Egyptian* Horſes were the beſt of the World; and doubtleſs, *Pharaoh*'s were the beſt of *Egypt*, for Spirit and Shape. Believers are compared to theſe; and yet have they no Tongue but needs Diſcipline. For, ſo much is demonſtrated by the *Epheſian* Saints being thus cautioned; Cautioned in the Text and Context, againſt the deteſtable Sins of the Tongue. A Principle of Grace in the Heart, excuſes not a Bridle in the Mouth. Without which, a very *Moſes* will ſpeak unadviſedly with his Lips; a *Job* will curſe his Birth-day; a *David*'s Fire will burn and break out; a *Jeremy* will abdicate himſelf from his Miniſtry, *Jer.* 20. 9.

T. 7. *Wiſdom is a valuable Commodity.* For, it ſeems that there is not a word that can be ſafely ſpoke without it. Fooliſh ones, be Treaſon and Poy-

ſon; and without a Stock of Wiſdom in our Hearts, all we ſpeak muſt be Fooliſh. That is, traiterous againſt God, and poiſonous to our Selves and our Neighbours. Silence, we would not be willingly condemned to; there are few but would rather be deprived of the Motion of their Hands and Feet, than of their Tongues. Nor indeed can a holy Man or Angel, chuſe to be Dumb. All the Creatures beſide, are Mutes; and but tuned Inſtruments. They are Angels and Men, that are to make the Muſick. They are the Orators of the Univerſity of the Creation. Miſerable are they, whoſe Mouths muſt neceſſarily ſpeak, and yet their Hearts cannot prudently indite!

T. 8. *Thoughts be not free.* For if the Words of the Mouth are not, why ſhould the Words of the Heart be ſo? If Fooliſh Talk with Men be deteſtable Sin, why not Fooliſh Talk with our ſelves, alſo? Thoughts be nothing but unfledged Words; Words, not yet taking wing, and flying forth. What we

we commonly name a Word, is a Thought flown abroad; a Spark aſcended from the fire of the Heart's Coal. True; Fooliſh Oral-Talks and Jeſts do ſin againſt our Neighbours, which mental ones do not. But, the Fox is an unclean Beaſt while it hides in its Hole, as well as when it cometh forth for its Prey. And ſecret Sins, are certain Sins as any. The old Law pronounced the Swan Unclean, though Feathers of Snow hid its black Skin. The Viper is not more deteſtable than the Cockatrices-Egg. Evil Thoughts grieved God to his Heart; Evil Thoughts made him repent that he had made Man!

T. 9. *Fooliſh Actions be groſs Shames.* For, if Fooliſh Words be Deteſtable, Works much more; Becauſe in them, Sin is obeyed and ſerved by the whole Man. And, if I may ſo ſpeak, the Devil is denied nothing you can grant him. Alſo, in them is the moſt Wilful of all Sin; for, as our Words are much more eaſily reſtrained than our Thoughts, ſo

our

our Actions are much more eaſily reſtrained than our Words. Beſides, in them is the moſt Laborious Sin; In wicked Thoughts and Words, Men offer Satan what coſts them next to nothing. Minds being volatile as Air, and Tongues as active as Fire. But the Work of the Hands ordinarily requireth ſome Sweat of the Brows. Again, in Sins of Action, is commonly a powerful Contagion; no Language is ſo perſwaſive to Good or Evil as the Language of Practice. Evil Communication much corrupteth good Manners; but, I think, not more than Evil Manners corrupt good Communication!

T. 10. *It's little Wonder that Peace is grown ſo ſcarce.* For, if Fooliſh Talks and Jeſts be what hath been ſaid, the wonder is, that any Peace at all is left among us. Becauſe, every where, theſe are eaten as Men eat Bread; no Conſcience is made of them. And, it were a Marvel if ſuch Poiſons made no ſtirs in our Souls; if ſuch Enemies of all Righteouſneſs raiſed no Wars in our Con-

Consciences; and no Variances with one another. Surely, we must less grieve the holy Comforter, before he very much comfort us with Peace in our selves, and with each other.

T. 11. *It is not True that All Men say.* For, generally, All do say, that this Talk, which God pronounces Abominable, is very Innocent and Useful: And its daily Practice is very consistent with true Godliness. God declares it to be a Plague of Leprosy; and he is a rare and singular Man, that will not take it for very Comeliness and Beauty. If any Spot, a Beauty-Spot.

T. 12. *Rods are for the back of Fools.* Severe Reproofs are due to Foolish Talkers. For, it seems, their Sin is detestable, as well as Drunkards and Whoremongers. And it should be considered by Ministers and Parents, that neither of them ought to Whisper and but Mutter, against that which God doth Thunder: Or to tempt their Pupils to believe, that Folly of Words is None, or but Small, by making their Reproofs of it Such.

T. 13.

T. 13. *Hony may be Poiſoned.* For, what more grateful than Jeſting? yet, what more Mortal than Fooliſh Jeſts? The Natural Hiſtorian tells us of an Hony in *Africa*, luſciouſly ſweet, but perpetually diſtracting all that eat of it; being by the Bees gathered from poiſonous Flowers. Juſt like it is the Fooliſh Jocularity ſo much admired in our day; the Haut-gouſt of all Diſcourſes, the Comedy of every Playful Chat. So valued, that it's proverbially ſaid, They will rather loſe their Friend, and Soul alſo, than their Jeſt. Moſt poiſonous are the Weeds whence this Hony is gathered; and moſt wild and mad are the operations of it. It deſtroys habitual Seriouſneſs, and Gravity; inducing a Wantonneſs and Levity Prejudicial, if not Deadly, to all Chriſtian Temper and Buſineſs. So St. *Chryſoſtom* on our Text; μαλακὴν ποιεῖ, It makes effeminate the Soul, and impatient of ſevere Thoughts.

T. 14. *Idle Company is a Swine-Sty.* Wherein is nothing to feed, but much to

to turn the Stomach of a good Man. For, ſooner are the Men of it to be found without Tongues, than without Talk; and much ſooner without any Talk, than without Fooliſh. And what is ſo loathſom, as hath been foreſhown. I judg of others by my ſelf, ſaith the bleſſed *Author of the Chriſtian Directory*; "I fly from a vain Talkative Perſon, "as from a Bed that hath Fleas or Lice. "I would ſhut my Doors againſt him, "as I would ſtop my Windows againſt "Wind and Cold in Winter.

T. 15. *The Snuffers of the Sanctuary ought to be of pure Gold.* Who ever would effectually Reprove and Reform others ill Ways, muſt Keep a good Tongue in his Head. For if Fooliſh Talks and Jeſts be ſo deteſtable, as we have heard; he that ſhall uſe them will have too ill a Name, to do any good Service. Becauſe, the beſt Meat is loathed when uncleanly Cooks dreſs it; and beſt Admonitions be nauſeated, when they are by Infamous Mouths delivered. Wiſely the *Spartan* Princes required

quired such good things as were spoke by any ill Man, to be taken up and repeated by some very good one: as fearing that the useful Documents would not look like themselves, coming out of a Fool's Mouth. Rhetorick gilds the Mouth, and gives it a rare gloss; but it is Grace that scowrs it clean, and fits it for use!

T. 16. *Holy Tongues are God's Silver Trumpets.* Gracious Discourse, is the Musick of his Delight. For, if the contrary be so detestable, this must needs be as delectable. It is not for nothing that the Holy Scripture giveth it such Eulogies. Naming it *Bread*, to Feed; *Silver*, to Enrich; *Health*, to make Strong and Useful; *Hony*, to Delight and give Pleasure; *Wells* of Water, to Refresh and Cleanse; *Scarlet*, to Adorn and make Honorable; *Glory*, to Exalt and Magnify God's Glory. For our Natural Faculties and our Supernatural Graces, without Holy Discourse, are Mutes. We commend not God to others, nor draw others unto God, by all our Knowledg

ledg and Wisdom, all our Hope and Love and Joy in Christ Jesus, without holy Discourse. Wherefore, It is only the Devil and his Angels would have us Dumb, and refrain from it. Nor is it to be doubted, but that such as stile it Cant and Nonsense, and fain would make an end of it; if it were in their Power, they would disturb the Heavenly Quire also; break up that Meeting; silence Angels and Glorified Spirits; make an end of the Song of God and of the Lamb; destroy together our *Hosanna's* here, and their *Hallelujah's* above!

Of the *Duties* which might be hence pressed, I commend these principal; though I have room but for short *Exhortations*, and must leave it to your selves to make just Enlargements.

Duty 1. *Learn the Weight of Words.* Great is the Moment of your least Talk. Light Words do make heavy Troubles here, and heavy Accounts for here-

hereafter. None weigh light in God's Ballance. The Psalmist saith of some, *Their own Tongue shall fall on them*, Psal. 64. 8. A fearful Weight! a Man would be easier under a Mountain of Lead. *Origen* conceited, that the Tongue of *Dives* was eminently his tormented Part in Hell, because it had been eminently his Sinning Part on Earth. And St. *Austin* in his Confessions cried out, That his Tongue had been the Furnace which had Vomited forth his impure Fires.

D. 2. *Unlearn false Rules of ordering your Words.* The Philosopher saith of Youth; but it's true of every Age, Ἤθει μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ λόγῳ. They Speak and Act more by Custom than by Reason. More as others do, than as all ought to do. The Precept of my Text cannot be obeyed, if this be not considered: that, the Most Mens Talks and Jests are nothing but Faults, and the Best Mens be not Faultless. That Most Mens are stark Naught, and the Best Mens are very Imperfect. And he

he that will be a Chriſtian, mu
Chriſt Jeſus his Pattern. As hi
ſo his Pattern. He muſt reno
contrary Precepts and Exam
addict himſelf unto Chriſt's
late ones. Out of this Faſhion
out of the Chriſtian World.

D. 3. *Buy rich Furniture fo*
Diſcourſe. While Heads have To
Tongues will have Talks; but
Hearts be Wiſe, Tongues Talk muſt
Fooliſh. *The Lips of the Wiſe diſperſe*
Knowledg, but the Heart of the Fooliſh
doth not ſo, Prov. 15. 7. The Heart is
the Shop whence the Tongue takes all
its Wares. If that be poor, and empty
of things of Value, this may and will
vend abundance of Wares, but no Goods.
Buy the Truth, then, as its Divine Au-
thor counſels you. In ſhort, Go to the
Price of true Wiſdom; Do not expect
it for nothing, though Grace offers you
a good Bargain; for you may have it
for Asking, though not without. God,
of his Wiſdom and Holineſs, will not
Give unleſs you Ask; Pray and Con-

Prayer. Men, of their Fol-
etfulneſs, and worſe, will rare-
w their Teaching on any
in from Asking. Wherefore,
ou come out of the Priſon of
ce, break the great Bar of
Ask Wiſdom, of God and
niſters ask it; and give neither
nem reſt, till you ſweetly Un-
ſtand the Myſtery of Chriſt and
he Laws of his Kingdom. Till you
fear not being asked the meaning,
of any Article of the Apoſtles *Creed*,
any Petition of the *Lord's Prayer*,
any *Commandment* of the Ten; or
being put to give an account of the
Nature and Uſe of *Holy Baptiſm* and
the *Lord's Supper*. When theſe you
Know, then be Inſtructive; till you
Know theſe, let your Tongues be per-
petually Inquiſitive. To be Dumb
is no Wiſdom; it is only to hide Folly:
He is Wiſe who Opens the Door of his
Mouth, firſt, to call Wiſdom in, and
afterwards to ſend it out!

D. 4. *Enact a Law of D*
Lay a Command on your
come behind your Thought.
ſelves the firſt Judges of yo
God and Men will not ſo oft
them, when you your ſelves ſh
Judg them before you do utt
To think before we ſpeak, is
vent abundance of God's Wra
Man's, and abundance of our
Repentance. When we do ſo,
Prevent many, and Leſſen all the Faul
of our Speech. For then, if Bad, yet
it is our Beſt; and to ſpeak the beſt a
Man can, is ſome Praiſe. He that uſeth
it, ſhall find, among equal Judges, as
much Pity as Blame for his very Faults.
Beſides; the Holy Ghoſt is offended
at the contrary Haſte. And He is much
pleaſed with this ſort of Slowneſs to
Speak. Inſomuch, that, by means of
his Holy Aids, Children Speak better
when Deliberate, than Doctors when
they are Raſh. Want of *Diſcretion*
banes the Talk of Millions; but want
of its *Exerciſe* as truly banes the Talk of
Thouſands.

...*Keep a ſtrict Hand upon the ...rrupters of the Tongue.* Upon ...ions, I mean. Love and Hate ...hat you ought, and as Much ...ought. Joy and Grieve, De... Fear, none but right Matters ...ue Meaſures. This will make ... to your Mind to School your ... But Diſeaſes of the Affe...s, be very Mortal to our Under...ndings. Their Fumes put out the Eye of its Judgment, and Kill the Heart of its Attention to our Acts. So that in what we call a Paſſion, the Tongue is as an Horſe in a Chaſe, not to be curbed; as a Ship in a Tempeſt, not to be managed.

D. 6. *Set up full Purpoſes againſt Vicious Talks.* Full ones are ſuch as the Underſtanding approves, the Conſcience commands, the Will chuſes, the Memory prompts; all Powers conſpire unto. You are *Chriſtians*, and have ſuch Purpoſes againſt Sin in general. But many, I fear, are *incautelous Chriſtians*, and have not ſuch

ſuch Purpoſes againſt foo
and Jeſts, in particular. T
ticular ones do honour God
will honour them. They
ward *Votes* and *Laws* of
Souls; and they will ſtand
what is their own. And m
Proviſion for their Execution,
doth not ordinarily ſuffer to be
leſs. Great is the Power of a H
Purpoſe.

D. 7. *Follow Reſolutions with Prayer.* When the black *Ignorance* is diſpelled, and baſe *Reluctance* of our Hearts is conquered; the *Falſeneſs* and Inconſtance remains to be feared. And as neither Hearts nor Tongues are to be ſafe kept but by Divine Power; the Cuſtody of neither is to be expected without Holy Prayer.

D. 8. *Give your Selves the Joy of every Victory.* Let him that hears your Prayer have the *Praiſe*, which is entirely his own; but take you the *Comfort*, which he allows and requires; when, through his Grace, you

...s speak; This Day, being ... I Reviled not; I Suffered, ...atned not; Being tempted ...on Wits unto Levity, I re... argued them into Seri... &c.--- When thus you Con... rough the Grace of your Lord, ... in the Lord and in his ... Joyfully Praise the Giver, ...chaser, and Worker, and Triumph ...is Goodness. This exquisite Plea...re will cherish Care, and sweeten ...ndeavours and Prayers for more such Victories!

D. 9. *Let nothing Supersede the Watch of your Lips.* Prayer engageth to Watchfulness, and not excuseth it. Spiritual Conquests also, excuse not Care; but together encourage and engage unto them. For, after them, Satan most rages; and Christians Souls, like as their Bodies, when in highest places, are most liable to Tempests. In short; no Beasts are at all times more apt to Stray, and to do Injury, than our Lips. No Fire

Fire more eaſily breaks o
hurt than the Tongue.
and Iniquity at any time
over watching ſo wild Ca
let them go without Yoke
pers. To give over look
Fire, of which, all know,
ver be too Careful.

D. 10. *Exerciſe an Holy R*
your ſelves. For the Sin o
Tongues, ſharply Reprove and
your Selves. Let Repentance
its Perfect Work; Humble your Sou
deeply, and give not over haſtily.
Spare not the Rod; and give no
over for the crying of Fleſh and
Blood. Unto them this Work is
grievous; but by this Sorrow of the
Countenance, Heart and Tongue are
made better. And, ſooner ſhall faulty Oxen go better without the Goad, and wildeſt Children be reclaimed without the Rod, than an Extravagant Tongue without this Rebuke.

D. 11. *Aſſociate with none but Men of a pure Language.* Who knows not

...-Omnipotency of chosen ...? It is certain that in cho... ...cked Company, God deserts ... Satan is let loose on them; *...hat they have is very much ...er.* They are as it were ..., and Satan the Potter; ...them into any sort of Ves... ... Dishonour. Hypocrites can ... Endure; but the Heart of a ...int doth Prefer, the Lip and Lan...age of *Canaan.* And they are Wise... Good, who willingly go near none, ...rom whom they cannot come Wiser ...nd Better, *Prov.* 14. 7.

D. 12. *Make your Friends your Monitors.* Give them your Leave, yea Intreaty, to tell you when you speak amiss. Raise their *Posse* for your Defence. It will be no contemptible one; unless when you have engaged them against your Sins, you side and take part with your Sins against them. A wonder it is there should be any need to urge this Practice. We make other Admonition the Condition of Friend-

Friendſhip; and cannot bea
Friend ſee our Feet in a wro
and doth not haſte to give
We ſhould reckon his Silen
Error, a Proclamation of his U
fulneſs and Guile.

D. 13. *Remember into what*
every Word of yours droppeth.
vine aweful One hears all you
plain as if there were no Ton
the World ſtirring but yours.
when the Thoughts hereof are ſtirr
in your Mind, Experience can tell yo
how they facilitate the Rule of your
Tongue. In the hearing of a wiſe Man, no Fool will prate fooliſhly, but a drunken One. Eſpecially if, as the wiſe Man is endued with *VViſdom* to deſpiſe him, he be alſo armed with *Authority* to puniſh him. What Mouths ſhould we have, if we duly minded how open God's Ear is now unto us; and how quickly his Mouth will be opened to judg us?

D. 14. *Eſteem it glorious Martyrdom to bear Reproach, for the Purity of your Speech.*

...ish Talking and Jesting

...e Language of one Coun-
...eulous to the Natives of ano-
...you are born from Heaven,
...aturalized Citizens of that
...ntry, and speak its Language,
...o avoiding of *cruel Mockings*
...ople of this Earth. These,
...nough to *endure*; no, but you
...*teem* as a Treasure. And Re-
...that you are dignified with
..., counting them to have more
...he Crown than the Cross in them.
...he Zeal of *Socrates* made him speak
...o hot as to scald his vicious Hearers;
the Wildfire of their Scoffs cast on
him, moved him not. Famous is his
Saying, That *if VVild-Asses kicked him, he would never commence a Suit against them.* And shall the Saints do no more than *Socrates*?

D. 15. *Be Salt to all on Earth in whom you have any interest.* Smartly Reprove the Vices of their Speech: Put forth your utmost Authority and Power to purge them away: Give your best Counsels, with Intreaties, for holy

holy Language: Follow wit
Encouragements, as many
the favour to be reformed by
many as receive the Divine
your Mouth. What a Charity
cure ſuch a Leproſy as that of
Talking and Jeſting? A La
Love that God will not forget
vice, in which you will find u
Reward. The Bleſſing of man
will come upon you; and your
will proſper. God will caſt more
into your Heart, and put more go
Words into your Mouth. For, to *faith-ful Sowers he will miniſter Seed.* Liberal Souls he will make Fat. Sweetly will he amend us all, when all do dutifully correct one another. Would you be made Clean, cleanſe your Company.

D. 16. Finally, *Bleſs God for your Truth, while you are ſhort of the Perfection that you ſeek.* He that ſeeks not Perfection, is not ſincere; but he that indeed is ſincere, through the Grace of the Goſpel he is a perfect Creature.

Man in Chriſt, and accep-
; he hath no Condemna-
ng on him; the Lord im-
n unto him; but honours
ſtiles him a Perfect Man: de-
in him as a Jewel, and an Apple
ye: Deals with him moſt
ly, withholding no good thing
m, and making every thing
or good to him; as though no
ere found in him, while much
e finds, and knows there is vaſtly
ore than he can find, in himſelf; and
is daily Cry is, *Who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death?* So that, as the Husband-man may with Joy look on his Corn-fields, and bleſs God for the Riches thereof, though there be thouſands and Ten thouſands of offenſive Weeds therein; no leſs may you joyfully praiſe God for his rich Saving-Grace, having the Teſtimony of your Conſciences, that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, not ſlothfully, but with all diligence given, you obey my Text. Although,

full

full often, the Good that you ſpeak, you do not; and the Evil you would not, that you do ſpeak rather, *Not you, but Sin that dwelleth in you*, ſpeaketh it. O bleſs the Lord that *you are not under the Law but under Grace.* Not under the Covenant of perſonal, perfect and perpetual Obedience; but under the Law or Covenant of Repentance, Faith, and ſincere Obedience! That you have a perfect Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt imputed to you; and ſhall not be rejected for the Imperfection of the Righteouſneſs inherent in you.

It is not the leaſt uſe to be made of my Doctrine, to bleſs God for our bleſſed Pair of Advocates. For his *Holy Spirit*, who works in us Evangelical Perfection; and his *Holy Son*, who hath redeemed us from Damnation for want of Legal Perfection, and of Abſolute Inoffenſiveneſs in our Talks. He makes an ill Uſe of it indeed, who ſcares himſelf into Deſperation either of

Attainableneſs of ſincere Con-
to it, or of the Acceptableneſs
o our Supream Judg. Againſt
I give Warning in my con-
Words; as ſuppoſing them
kelieſt to paſs unregarded.
already publiſhed *Directions*
ives to Holy Diſcourſe; I con-
ith no more added, than the
e's Alarms, *Whoſoever ſhall keep*
ole Law, and yet offend in the one
t (of my Text) *he is guilty of*
. And, *if any Man ſeem to be Re-*
gious, and bridleth not his Tongue, but
deceiveth his own Heart, this Man's
Religion is vain.

FINIS.